

February 15, 2017

Appropriations Committee Public Hearing Testimony

Good Evening Chairpersons and Members of the Appropriations Committee. I am submitting this testimony in opposition to THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAMS. In his proposal, the Governor seeks to reduce funding for the Services for Persons with Disabilities line item, which includes the Brain Injury Alliance of Connecticut, by 20%.

As a Clinical Neuropsychologist and Program Director of the Neurobehavioral Program at Hospital for Special Care, I see the potentially devastating effects of acquired brain injury (ABI) firsthand daily. Brain injuries should be considered to be a chronic medical condition and there are many folks in the community living with unmet needs. When there is insufficient or inadequate treatment and care for survivors of ABI this can result in emotional and behavioral disorders, psychiatric hospitalizations, and homelessness – all which contribute to significant costs to society.

No other organization in the state does what BIAC does, including the Department of Social Services (DSS), which contracts with BIAC to provide the many essential services that it is not equipped to offer. BIAC attempts to meet the needs of the State's brain injury survivors on behalf of DSS efficiently and effectively. It is a small but mighty organization that uses its funds wisely. If BIAC is no longer able to provide these services, DSS would no longer have the mechanism to provide these essential services required as part of the ABI Medicaid Waiver and needed compliance with CMS. BIAC's services only cost the state \$104,228 last year.

A 20% reduction in funding would severely impact BIAC and the services they provide to the community. Please maintain funding for the Services for Persons with Disabilities line so that BIAC can be there for those who need them most.

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